

May 27 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1997

greater stability in all of Europe, including Russia. And in turn, that will increase the security of Europe's North American partners—the United States and Canada—as well.

We establish this partnership because we are determined to create a future in which European security is not a zero-sum game, where NATO's gain is Russia's loss and Russia's strength is our alliance's weakness. That is old thinking; these are new times. Together, we must build a new Europe in which every nation is free and every free nation joins in strengthening the peace and stability for all.

Half a century ago, on a continent darkened by the shadow of evil, brave men and women in Russia and the world's free nations fought a common enemy with uncommon valor. Their partnership, forged in battle, strengthened by sacrifice, cemented by blood, gave hope to millions in the West and in Russia that the grand alliance would be extended in peace. But in victory's afterglow, the freedom the Russian people deserved was denied them. The dream of

peace gave way to the hard reality of cold war, and our predecessors lost an opportunity to shape a new Europe, whole and free.

Now we have another chance. Russia has opened itself to freedom. The veil of hostility between East and West has lifted. Together we see a future of partnership too long delayed that must no longer be denied. The founding act we signed captures the promise of this remarkable moment. Now we must implement it in good faith, so that future generations will live in a new time that escapes the 20th century's darkest moments and fulfills its most brilliant possibilities.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. at the Elysee Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Boris Yeltsin and Minister of Foreign Affairs Yevgeniy Primakov of Russia; President Jacques Chirac of France; NATO Secretary General Javier Solana; and Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany.

Statement on the Resignation of Reed E. Hundt as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission

May 27, 1997

It was with regret that I learned today that Reed Hundt, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, intends to leave before the end of his term, upon appointment of his successor.

Chairman Hundt has been a strong and visionary leader of the FCC during this historic period in telecommunications policy. His steadfast commitment to the public interest and to bringing the benefits of competition to consumers is evident in his many accomplishments during his tenure, including the successful launching of spectrum auctions and the Commission's ontime implementation of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. His expertise and counsel were indispensable in bringing home this year's World Trade Organization agreement on tele-

communications, which will open markets abroad as never before.

Perhaps most importantly, Chairman Hundt helped make the FCC an advocate for our children. He reinvigorated children's broadcasting, and he took pathbreaking steps to ensure that every classroom and library in America will be linked to the information superhighway.

Chairman Hundt's leadership has opened opportunity to businesses here and abroad, while ensuring that all Americans share in the benefits of the telecommunications revolution. The Vice President and I are sorry to see him go and extend to him thanks on behalf of the American people for his excellent service.

Statement on the National Economy May 27, 1997

Today's Conference Board release, along with the University of Michigan's release earlier this month, indicate more good news on the economy. Today's report shows that Americans are more confident about their current and future economic conditions than they have been in 28 years. With consumer confidence, unemployment, and inflation the best they've been in decades, America's economy is more than ever the envy of the world.

Unemployment is at its lowest level in 24 years, economic growth is the highest it has been in a decade, and inflation is the lowest since John F. Kennedy was President. We have already cut the deficit 77 percent since 1992, helping spark this remarkable period of strong growth and low inflation. The bipartisan budget agreement—which will balance the budget for the first time since 1969—will help to continue this solid economic performance.

The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders in The Hague, The Netherlands May 28, 1997

Prime Minister Kok. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm very glad to say that President Clinton and President Santer and I have had very productive and fruitful discussions this morning in the framework of our semiannual EU-U.S. summit on the new transatlantic agenda, including the transatlantic marketplace and a wide range of other issues. We have been making very good progress in implementing the new transatlantic agenda since its adoption, now 1½ years ago.

We achieved a number of concrete results. I'll mention a few of them. This morning an agreement will be signed on the control on chemical precursors for drugs. This means an important step towards better controlling substances that are used for the production of synthetic drugs. We decided to step up our operation in the fight against drug trafficking in the Caribbean. This included joint studies on maritime cooperation, exchange of information and equipment, and training of police and judicial authorities.

Negotiations have been concluded for the EU to join the U.S., Japan, and South Korea in the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, KEDO, underlining our global responsibilities and shared commitment to strengthen nonproliferation efforts.

In the context of the transatlantic marketplace, we will sign an agreement on customs cooperation that will facilitate trade and contrib-

ute to the fight against fraud and corruption. We also reached agreement on veterinary inspections, thus preventing a trade conflict that might otherwise have arisen on the export of meat products. And furthermore, we are very close to a common understanding with regard to the mutual recognition of norms and standards of products, the so-called mutual recognition agreements. I hope that we will be able to tie up these discussions in a few days' time.

We have implemented the small-business initiative which bridges European and American small- and medium-sized enterprises by means of linking better business and organizing joint events. We agreed on an awards program to encourage democracy in civil society across the Continent of Europe. And apart from these agreements, we discussed a number of specific foreign policy issues.

We looked back briefly on our historic meeting in Paris yesterday where we signed the NATO-Russia Founding Act, and we looked at some important meetings ahead of us, firstly, the G-7 meeting—or G-8—in Denver, the special session of the U.N. General Assembly on the environment in New York, and the NATO summit in Madrid, which is 2 months from now. And I informed President Clinton yesterday already about the main elements of the upcoming European summit in Amsterdam.